United Nations A/HRC/37/NGO/200

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 March 2018

English only

Human Rights Council
Thirty-seventh session
26 February-23 March 2018
Agenda item 2
Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

Written statement* submitted by Action contre la faim, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is hereby circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 March 2018]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.18-04554(E)
1804554

Please recycle

Action Contre la Faim statement on Sri Lanka

Honorable Members of the Human Rights Council,

11 years ago, 17 Action Against Hunger humanitarian workers were lined up and assassinated a bullet to the head in the premises of the organization, in Muttur, Sri Lanka.

This massacre sadly classifies as one of the most atrocious war crimes committed against humanitarian personnel. In the 11 years since the massacre occurred, despite Action Against Hunger continuous and strong advocacy for justice and as the Report of the High Commissioner states it, "no noticeable progress" has been observed in ensuring accountability in this emblematic case.

Action Against Hunger strongly reiterates previous demands supporting recommendations made by the High Commissioner and calls for Sri Lanka to establish, without any further delay, a credible **special court, habilitated to deal with the most serious crimes**, associated to a clear timeline of implementation.

For the credibility and independence of justice, this court must **integrate international judges, prosecutors and investigators mandated to try war crimes and crimes against humanity.** The court should ensure that any investigation be truly independent and must integrate a prosecuting organ, a defence office, and a witness and victims protection programme.

Action Against Hunger submits that the United Nations and the international community must urgently address Sri Lanka's utter failure to fulfil its international obligations with regards to fight against impunity. In the absence of credible action, Action against Hunger calls on Member States to exercise universal jurisdiction as required.

Our 17 colleagues killed in Muttur were there to help the populations recover from disasters. Their unpunished murder is sending a grave message: that aid workers can be killed in absolute impunity.

In light of current events in Sri Lanka and around the world, this cannot set a precedent.